

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being vague and indefinite; Claims 1-5 and 7-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Akiba in view of Fischell; and Claim 6 has been indicated as being allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 3 has been canceled, without prejudice, and thus, Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 remain active.

Considering first then the Examiner's rejection of Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, it is to be noted that the claims have now been amended for compliance with U.S. patent practice and procedure. If the Examiners determines, however, that any additional changes are needed, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' attorney for a possible amendment by Examiner's amendment, if deemed necessary.

Considering next then the rejection of Claims 1-5 and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiba in view of Fischell et al., Applicants note that Claim 1 has now been amended to further restrict the claimed invention with respect to the directions of connection of the first fluid conduit 4 and second fluid conduit 5 to the mouth piece 10. More particularly, Applicants note that the first fluid conduit 4 is connected to the first connection port 13 and extends linearly toward the insertion tube 1. The second fluid conduit 5 is connected to the second connection port 14 provided at one side of the mouth piece 10 and is guided along a line which is inclined with respect to the universal cable 3. These features are illustrated in the figures. Based upon this configuration, the first and second fluid conduits 4, 5 can be easily and completely washed by insertion of a brush therein 2 from the mouth piece 10.

Contrary to the above-noted advantages, the endoscopic fluid conduit system of Akiba teaches the use of a junction point of three conduits at a casing in a manipulating head assembly. Accordingly, it can be appreciated that such cannot be cleaned by insertion of a washing brush into these conduits. The newly cited reference to Fischell also does not teach or disclose a fluid supply system for supplying fluid selectively from a manipulating head or from a universal cable of an endoscope and thus does not rectify the deficiencies noted above with regard to Akiba. It is further noted that none of the remaining references of record teach or disclose Applicants' claimed invention. In view of this and in view of the dependency of Claims 2-8 upon independent Claim 1, it is submitted that Claims 2-8 also merit indication of allowability.

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 6 is hereby acknowledged and is sincerely appreciated.

In view of the foregoing, an early and favorable Office Action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

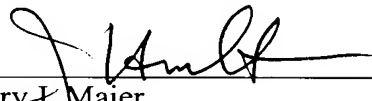
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**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000  
Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
(OSMMN 06/04)

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Gregory J. Maier  
Registration No. 25,599  
  
James D. Hamilton  
Registration No. 28,421  
Attorneys of Record